

15. (AMENDED) An integrated circuit fabrication method, comprising the steps of:

- 5 (a.) providing a partially fabricated integrated circuit structure which has an uneven topography containing high points;
- (b.) applying and curing spin-on glass, to form a first dielectric layer;
- (c.) depositing dielectric material under vacuum conditions, to form a second dielectric layer over said first layer, said second dielectric layer having a thickness equal to or less than said first layer;
- 10 (d.) applying and curing spin-on glass, to form a dielectric stack including a third dielectric layer over said first and second layers, said third dielectric layer having a thickness equal to or greater than said second layer;
- 15 (e.) performing a global etchback to substantially remove said dielectric stack from said high points of said partially fabricated structure;
- (f.) deposition of an interlevel dielectric;
- (g.) etching holes in said interlevel dielectric in [predetermined] locations; and
- 20 (h.) depositing and patterning a metallization layer to form a [desired] pattern of connections, including connections through said holes.

Please cancel non-elected Claims 22 - 25 without prejudice.

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for her careful and very thorough Office Action. The Examiner is particularly thanked for her helpful suggestions regarding correction of the alleged informalities.

The claims presently outstanding are Claims 1 - 25. By the foregoing amendments, Claims 1, 8, and 15 are sought to be amended. In addition, non-elected Claims 22 - 25 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice. These changes are believed not to introduce new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

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Applicant hereby affirms the traversal of the restriction requirement, and the provisional election of Claims 1 - 21 for examination.

Note that the amendments to Claims 1, 8, and 15 are intended to be purely formal amendments, and are believed not to change the scope of these claims.

Drawing Corrections

The drawings have now been changed to expressly label Figures 1A - 1C as prior art. However, it is noted that this change is intended to be purely a formal change in compliance with the Examiner's express formal requirement, and no admission as to the scope of prior art is made thereby.

Section 112(2) ("Clearly and Distinctly Setting Forth")

The foregoing amendments to the claims are believed to remove any remaining informalities, and thus all grounds of §112(2) rejection are now believed to be obviated.

Thus, all grounds of rejection and/or objection are traversed or accommodated, and favorable reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested. The Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned attorney if she believes that an interview might be useful for any reason.

Respectfully submitted,



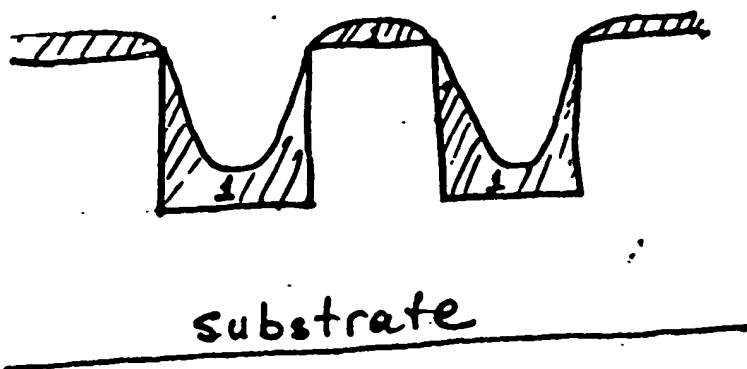
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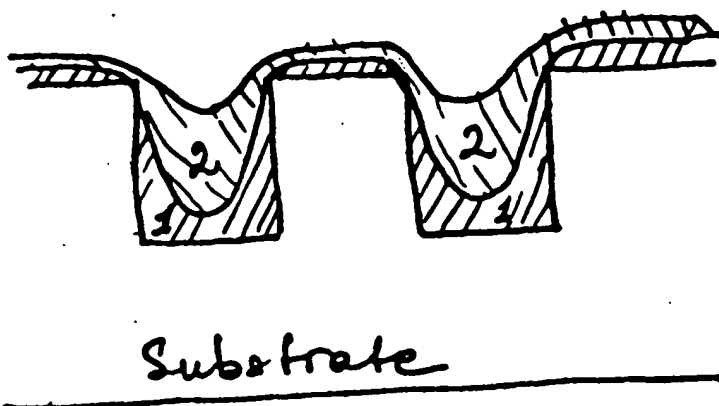
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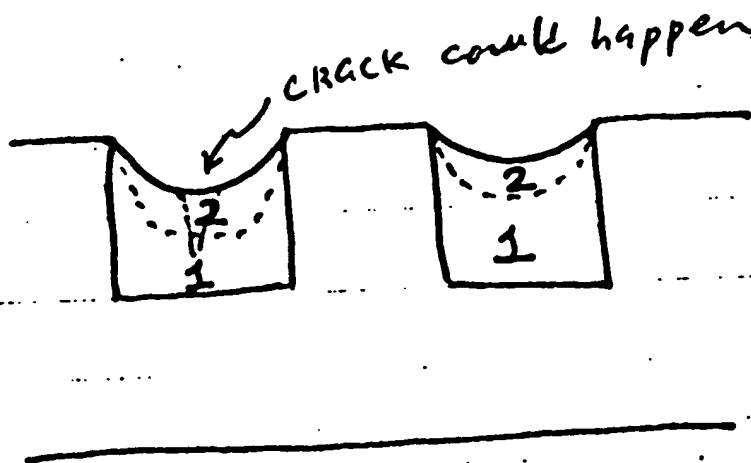
Spin/Cure of SOG-1

Fig. 1A
PRIOR ART



Spin SOG-2
on top of SOG-1
and cure

Fig. 1B
PRIOR ART



SOG etchback

Fig. 1C
PRIOR ART